

# Khutba

English

13.08.2010

## Ramadan

O You who believe, – Fear Allah, as He should be feared, and die not except as Muslims.  
O You who believe, – Be aware of Allah, and speak a straightforward word. He will forgive your sins and repair your deeds. And whoever takes Allah and His prophet as a guide, has already achieved a mighty victory...

My respected Brothers and Sisters,  
We are in the first week of Ramadhan. This khutbah is a short reminder about the Holy Month. Why do we fast? What do we expect to gain from fasting? And, how can we make the best of Ramadhan? What should we do to get the maximum benefit?

“O You who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may learn self-restraint.” [2:183]

Those of us who are fasting, enjoy the satisfaction that we are giving up our delicious food and drink, our leisure and amusement so that we can please our Lord and Sustainer. Allah tells us in His Holy Book, all our other duties concern the poor, the needy, our families and ourselves, but Fasting is for Allah alone, and He rewards whom He pleases. We must always bear in mind the purpose of our fasting. It's not only to stay hungry and thirsty. It's to be conscious of Allah at all times. Fasting teaches us to tame our lower passions, al-nafs-al-ammara-bis-sow. This is the lower self that clings to the earth, and drags us towards all the hateful and shameful actions, envy, greed, sexual lust, jealousy, anger, hatred, revenge...

Fasting helps us to be disciplined. It helps us to strengthen our conscience, the higher self, which in Arabic is called al-nafs-al-law-waamah. This is the self-reproaching nafs, this is the higher self that constantly blames itself and seeks to put right all the errors and sins of the lower self..

This struggle to cultivate self-discipline is not only for Ramadan. It's a lifelong struggle. Shaytan will constantly offer temptations and make our evil nature seem pleasing to us. But we must be on guard, and we must remember what pleases Allah. We must say, A-oothu bil-laahi minash shaytaanir rajeem: I take refuge in Allah from Shaytaan, the Cursed One. We must constantly keep in mind that Allah will hold us to account for our actions. We do not want to be among the losers, the ones whose end is hellfire, Jahannam, wal A-oothu bil-Laah! We want to be among the winners, the ones who will enter paradise. We want to spend our lives, purifying our thoughts and words and actions, so that when we die we have a purified heart and soul. We want our Ruh, our soul to be as pure and unblemished as the day when we were born. The last verses of Sura Al Fajr, are indeed the words we would all like to hear from Allah, when we die and return to Him: “O Purified Soul, well pleased with yourself, and well-pleasing to Me, enter you among my devotees, enter you my garden.”

Ramadan is also a time for us to remember those who are fasting every day of their lives, not by choice, not because they want to fast, but because of poverty. They simply don't have enough to eat or drink. We who enjoy clean drinking water, hot meals every day and a warm comfortable home, we must remember that we are very fortunate to have these blessings. Ramadhan is a time to remember others less fortunate. It's a time to show Compassion and Mercy. You know, every time a Muslim begins an important action, he says the Basmallah: Bismillaahir Rahmaanir Raheem! He says: I begin this action in the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate!

Dear Brothers and sisters, how many times a day do we say these words? Surely it must have some effect on our behaviour, if we are conscious of the meaning. Surely compassion and mercy must flow from our words and actions. In time our whole character should be infused with Allah's mercy and compassion. This is one of the big lessons of Ramadan. And that is why it is important for us to pay our Zakat during this month. Zakat is the 2.5% of unused wealth that goes to the poor and needy. Let us try to remember these important lessons of Ramadan.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the Worlds; may the greetings and peace be upon the best messenger, Muhammad SAW; and upon his family and upon all of his companions. Behold, Allah and His angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O you who believe! Ask for blessings on him, and salute him with a worthy greeting. O Allah! Send your greetings upon Muhammad and his family, just as you sent your greetings on Abraham, and his family. O Allah, send your blessings on Muhammad and his family, just as you blessed Abraham and his family. In both worlds, you are praiseworthy and exalted."

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Many of us think that Ramadan is a time to 'go slow' and to avoid exerting ourselves. Some of us, if we had the opportunity, we would want to sleep all day until iftar. This is completely wrong. Ramadan is not a time for hibernation. That's for the polar bears and other bears in the cold Arctic winter. It's not for Muslims! Ramadan is the time we should be busy reading and understanding the Quran, studying our faith and trying to improve our knowledge and our character. It's a time of spiritual renewal and revival.

Many important events took place in Ramadan:

The Holy Quran was revealed in Ramadan.

The Battle of Badr took place in Ramadan.

Makka was conquered in a bloodless battle by Prophet Muhammad sws during Ramadan.

Tariq bin Ziyad conquered Spain during Ramadan. The list goes on and on...

So remember, Ramadan is not an excuse for laziness. It is a time for improving ourselves, improving our mind and body and spirit. We must welcome Ramadan like a long lost friend. May Allah accept our fasting which we do only for His sake. We do not fast just to lose weight or to show off to others, how religious we are. We fast because we love Allah, and we want to please Him. We owe Him so much. Fasting is a very small thing that HE asks us to do, only for Him. May Allah spread His richest blessings on us, and on all those who fast during Ramadan, purely out of love for Him. May He help us to purify ourselves, by forgiving our sins and may He join us in the company of His friends, the awliyaa Allah.

O Allah, help us to purify ourselves in body, mind, heart and spirit. Help us to seek and find your good pleasure, and O Allah, remember us in the company of your beloved friends.

"O Allah, do not let our hearts deviate from the Truth now that we have been guided, but grant us Mercy from Your very Presence, for You are the Grantor of bounties without measure."

My Lord, help me to perfect my prayer, and of my descendants, Our Lord, accept this prayer....

My Lord, forgive me, and my parents, and all Believers until the Day of Reckoning..

Glory to Allah, Lord of Majesty and Honour, and Peace on the Prophets, and Praise to Allah, Lord of all creation!

Ameen.